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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 5th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. ELARABY	(Egypt)
later:	Mr. PATOKALLIO (Vice-Chairman)	(Finland)
later:	Mr. ELARABY (Chairman)	(Egypt)
later:	Mr. PATOKALLIO (Vice-Chairman)	(Finland)
later:	Mr. ELARABY (Chairman)	(Egypt)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to point out that in the course of the informal consultations and the organizational meeting that took place last week I read to Committee members the letter I had received from the President of the General Assembly concerning punctuality. We are supposed to start meetings at 10 a.m. The interpreters are here at that time. I can understand it if we start 5, 10 or 15 minutes late but I do not think we can continue starting half an hour late. I hope I will not have to remind members again of this request from the President of this session of the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEMS 49 to 65; 68 and 142; and 67 and 69 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ITEMS

Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria): I convey to you, Sir, my delegation's sincere congratulations on your election to preside over the First Committee this year. I should like to add that it gives me personal satisfaction to see a most distinguished disarmament expert and, if I may say so, a personal friend, in the Chair of this important disarmament body.

Unfortunately, I also have to express my deep sorrow at the terrible earthquake which hit your country two days ago and which brought immense suffering to the inhabitants of your country's capital city as well as to the population in other parts of Egypt. Please accept the assurances of my own and my delegation's compassion.

At the outset of my statement I should also like to commend the Vice-Chairmen Mr. Pasí Patokallio of Finland and Mr Dae Won Suh of the Republic of Korea, and the Rapporteur, Mr. Jerzy Zaleski of Poland.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

Last but not least I should like to extend a hearty welcome to all the delegations participating for the first time in the work of the First Committee.

Two years ago events in Central and Eastern Europe initiated a development which, in its final result, revolutionized global security concepts. The end of the cold war finally did away with an artificial stability which, for nearly five decades, had relied on the threat of the use of huge quantities of weapons of all categories. Not only had huge armouries been built up by the super-Powers but they had been made available to countries all over the globe in order to defend the interests of the two antagonistic blocs. When the formerly communist States embarked on a process of emancipation from an ideology that had been translated into oppressive structures, the newly achieved freedoms augured well for the final victory of democracy, prosperity and peace.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

In the meantime, countless statements contained pledges to capitalize on this historic opportunity and to build a cooperative system of security in order to sustain global and regional stability with peaceful means. It was generally agreed that future-oriented approaches had to be adopted to respond to the dramatically changed security requirements. Only radically new thinking could overcome the ghosts of the past that still haunt us.

The new optimism reflected in public opinion and the mass media has since been put in perspective by emerging realities. We have had to recognize that international security is no longer determined solely by military considerations, but also by its economic, social, environmental and human rights dimensions. The achievement of international security and stability is therefore no longer limited to the concept of defence. It now encompasses also the concept of cooperation. The universal issues of poverty, underdevelopment, population growth, mass migration, depletion of the ozone layer, global warming and environmental degradation, each of which constitutes a hazard to stability, highlight our mutual interdependence. Finding solutions to these global problems in order to sustain stability has become our common responsibility.

Since the end of the cold war the level of the global military threat has been significantly diminished. Tragic events of the last year have drawn our attention to the relevance of regional security issues. Global confrontation of the super-Powers led to a massive build-up of arms in many regions which are now beyond centralized control. The availability of huge stocks of arms has led to terrible bloodshed in conflicts within as well as between States which only recently have gained their sovereignty.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

All efforts to develop new stability within the universal system have to be complemented by regional considerations. Thus, Austria welcomes the increased significance attached by the United Nations to regional disarmament issues within a global context of security. A timely use of preventive diplomacy and the early implementation of confidence- and security-building measures might have helped to avoid some of the ongoing wars, especially the tragic confrontation in the former Yugoslavia.

While today's world requires a comprehensive approach in order to stabilize international security, Austria believes that the single most effective measure for securing and sustaining peace is still a balanced and significant reduction of existing arsenals. We therefore urge all the Members of the United Nations to pursue all possible multilateral arms control and disarmament efforts and to concentrate boldly on the following issues.

The most important and immediate goal is the reduction of the danger still posed by the remaining arsenals of nuclear weapons. While recent unilateral initiatives and bilateral agreements have turned round the fatal spiral multiplying the capacity for nuclear overkill, we have to be aware that, even after the implementation of all envisaged reductions, there will still be tens of thousands of nuclear warheads to threaten global survival. In addition, the nuclear issue is too important to leave the initiative to a select group of nuclear-weapon States while the rest of the world leans back in the hope that results might come about.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

The United Nations is the only forum for negotiating universal nuclear arms control and disarmament treaties and then securing their appropriate and unambiguous verification. Thus, within the framework of the United Nations, measures will have to be negotiated, strengthened and implemented to secure the non-proliferation of nuclear arms, stop the qualitative nuclear-arms race and secure real nuclear-arms reductions.

The spread of nuclear arms to non-nuclear-weapon States has been effectively prevented by the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). With the ratification of the NPT by China and France during the last year all five declared nuclear-weapon States are now parties to the Treaty. With the break-up of the Soviet Union the question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons gained a new dimension. Suddenly, the traditional five-member club of nuclear Powers had an enlarged membership of eight before adequate rules and procedures had been agreed upon.

Austria therefore welcomes the Lisbon nuclear non-proliferation Protocol of 23 May, and its article V, stating that Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine shall adhere to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States parties as early as possible. Austria regrets that a number of countries, among them a few with considerable peaceful nuclear programmes and facilities, have not yet decided to become States parties to the NPT, and it hopes that these States will reconsider and acceed to the Treaty to make it a truly universal instrument.

The NPT and its verification provisions have contributed significantly to international peace and stability. Enforced by the International Atomic Energy Agency and its safeguards system, it has also been successful in ensuring that nuclear material and equipment for peaceful purposes are not diverted to military use.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

With regard to the 1995 conference envisaged in article X, paragraph 2 of the NPT, Austria will support all efforts to secure a consensus on an indefinite, unconditional extension of the Treaty.

The qualitative nuclear-arms race has to be re-evaluated in the light of recent international developments. The traditional arguments for continued nuclear testing were never shared by my country. Austria has always been supportive of all efforts to stop nuclear testing and has always voted in favour of the relevant General Assembly resolutions. My delegation welcomes the encouraging announcements by France and Russia of a suspension of nuclear testing, as well as the recent decision by the United States Government, upon the advice of the United States Congress, to introduce a nine-month moratorium on nuclear testing.

Nevertheless, we consider the early conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty to be of the utmost importance, and we hope the Conference on Disarmament will re-establish the ad hoc committee on a nuclear-test ban at the beginning of its 1993 session. In that context, I should like to transmit to the nuclear-weapon States an appeal by the Austrian Parliament dated 5 June 1992 for an immediate halt to nuclear testing even before the conclusion of the relevant international treaty.

The effective reduction of the existing nuclear arsenals is in the interest of all States represented in the United Nations. The Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - and the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START Treaty) marked significant progress. In the Lisbon Protocol the United States of America and the four former Soviet Republics with nuclear

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

weapons signed an agreement on the ratification of the START Treaty. Thus, the START Treaty will be submitted to the national legislatures of all four States which inherited the nuclear arsenal of the former Soviet Union. We hope that Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine will soon follow the encouraging example of the United States for swift ratification of the START Treaty.

The past year produced unprecedented progress in nuclear disarmament. The unilateral decisions by the United States and the Soviet Union last autumn to eliminate their ground-launched tactical nuclear weapons and the announcements by President Bush and President Yeltsin in June 1992 of far-reaching cuts in strategic arms should now facilitate a sustainable nuclear-disarmament process within the multilateral disarmament machinery. Only global agreements, brought about with the active participation of all States, will be covered by an adequate verification system to secure their efficient implementation.

The elimination of all weapons of mass destruction has always been an issue of great importance for Austria. Hence, my delegation wholeheartedly commends the Conference on Disarmament and its Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons under the chairmanship of Ambassador Ritter von Wagner on its historic success in reaching consensus on the draft Convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction. Once adopted, the convention will be the most complete disarmament agreement, totally eliminating chemical weapons in all their aspects within 10 years.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

The negotiated consensus on the draft Convention on chemical weapons has proved that tenacious efforts to implement a clear political will, facilitated by a favourable international climate, can overcome substantial obstacles. This success of the Conference of Disarmament augurs well for future multilateral disarmament efforts.

Recent trends in conflicts show that wars are increasingly fought by peoples rather then by countries. In this context the issue of conventional weapons deserves closer attention.*

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* Mr. Patokallio (Finland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

The international involvement in many conflict zones during the cold war has led to the transfer of huge quantities of conventional arms into different regions. Subsequently, many countries are left with large stocks of arms readily available for ongoing or new conflicts. In addition, achieved weapons sophistication and improved deployment facilities have added to the enormous destruction capabilities. Today, most military goals can be achieved with conventional weapons.

The additional attention paid to the question of conventional weapons has been timely. The most intensely debated and negotiated resolution of last year's First Committee was the one on transparency in armaments introducing a universal and non-discriminatory Register of international conventional arms transfers. Transparency achieved by universal participation in the Register might eventually lead to restraint in arms transfer. Furthermore, the Conference on Disarmament was mandated to address the problems relating to the transfer of high technology with military application and to weapons of mass destruction. This will further increase transparency and, subsequently, help in building confidence.

Regrettably, transparency and increased confidence will not stop arms exports per se. As long as weapons industries continue their production on cold-war levels, the resulting overproduction will find its markets. Hence, the new thinking as a result of reduced threat perceptions will also have to impact on production patterns in our national industries. A reallocation of funds from defence industries into future-oriented civilian industries will, rapidly, more than compensate for loss of employment, which might temporarily occur during the initial phase of restructuring. Alternatives in patterns of industrial production, complemented by greater international transparency and

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

thus confidence, might facilitate consultations among the leading arms exporters to agree on a coordinated reduction of arms transfers.

Austria would like to commend the Disarmament Commission for having been able at this year's session to conclude the work on objective information on military matters. Since I had the honour to chair the first Working Group on this question within the Commission - at that time still called a Consultative Group - the successful conclusion of this agenda item gives me a great deal of personal satisfaction. The agreed text on "Guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters" will definitely facilitate confidence building in the future. The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe has illustrated that conventional disarmament can effectively be dealt within a regional context. Within regional arrangements, a balanced reduction of conventional arms - pivotal for stability on a lower level of armament - can be achieved.

The new Vienna Document 1992 introduces new confidence- and security-building measures for the substantively enlarged Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe region. Although regional confidence- and security-building measures cannot be implemented universally without the necessary adaptations, experiences gained in one region can enhance arms-control and disarmament efforts in other regions. Austria believes that the capacity to identify and to implement adequate confidence- and security-building measures will be decisive for the future success of preventive diplomacy.

In a comprehensive approach to international security, arms control and disarmament continue to play a pivotal role. Through a balanced process of disarmament, the threat is reduced on a regional and global level. In addition, the subsequent reduction of defence industries will set free scarce

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

financial resources that can be reallocated to restore environmental damage caused by the production and by the testing of nuclear and other weapons, to develop new and future-oriented industries, and to find lasting solutions for increasingly destabilizing global problems. These are enough good reasons to intensify our efforts to take advantage of the favourable political environment and to pursue the mandate of this Disarmament Committee.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): I should like to begin my intervention by congratulating Mr. Elaraby, a former colleague from Geneva, on his assumption of the chairmanship of this important Committee. His deep knowledge of disarmament issues and vast experience of United Nations matters make him a very qualified Chairman indeed. I am convinced that, under his able guidance, we shall achieve very satisfactory results during this year's session.

My congratulations also go to the Vice-Chairman who is presiding now and to the other members of the Bureau. It is a particular pleasure to see Mr. Patokallio, a friend and Nordic colleague, presiding over the Committee. I wish you all every success in your endeavours.

Before I turn to the subject-matter of my statement, I also wish to express the sympathy and condolences of my delegation to the victims of the tragic earthquake that occurred in Egypt the day before yesterday.

Since last year's session of the First Committee, the new and promising process of disarmament has been further strengthened. The undertakings of the two major nuclear Powers to withdraw and destroy whole categories of nuclear weapons - after decades of nuclear build-up - have contributed to a new pattern of international relations. The post-cold-war era has already paved the way for such far-reaching achievements as the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, the chemical weapons Convention, and the Open Skies Treaty. All in all, we may see a world where nuclear weapons will gradually be phased out.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

We now face a radically different but not necessarily less complicated international situation, which requires new thinking and new initiatives. The international community must adapt itself to these radical changes and seek new approaches and concrete agreements that will help relax tensions, liberate resources for sustainable development, and lead to a safer world.

The new world, with roots in the old bipolar structure, has in many regions been born with great difficulties and pain. Security can no longer be seen only in a military perspective. Other sources of instability in the economic, social, humanitarian, and ecological fields are increasingly considered threats to international peace and security. This means new challenges for the United Nations, in particular the Security Council. It is indeed encouraging that the Council has been able to shoulder such a decisive role in world politics.

As pointed out in the recent Yearbook of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, global military expenditures continue their downward trend. This is mainly due to the fact that the United States and the Commonwealth of Independent States have reduced their military spendings. Reduced spendings alone may not, however, lead to improved prospects for disarmament and peace.

The threats of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of an excessive build-up of conventional arms are real and rank high on the international agenda of security and disarmament. Proliferation issues are likely to dominate security concerns for many nations in the decade to come. President Bush, in his statement in the General Assembly a few weeks ago, presented some very constructive proposals as regards disarmament. Sweden endorses, inter alia, the idea of providing technical assistance to States to promote non-proliferation and the destruction of weapons of mass destruction.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

In a world of international interdependence, it is essential to strengthen the multilateral, cooperative approach The Conference on Disarmament was established to respond to the need for a truly multilateral negotiating forum. The way in which it discharges its duties will have consequences for the credibility of and the confidence in the Conference as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

The successful conclusion of the chemical-weapons negotiations has set the stage for a new era in the history of multilateral negotiations on disarmament and arms control. It provides a positive and much-needed impetus to efforts to seek solutions at the negotiating table to problems that face the entire international community. After this achievement it will be necessary to take a fresh look at the agenda and the programme of work of the Conference, as well as its membership and other related issues.

One of the first requirements for the relevance and effective functioning of the Conference is that its agenda be topical and that all Member States be prepared to deal with the issues in a pragmatic and serious manner. The nuclear-test ban remains a priority item. In addition, the questions of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, negative security assurances and the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities are topical, as is the new item on transparency in armaments. The structure of the agenda should not be rigid. Merging some nuclear issues would serve both to keep them on the agenda and to make it possible to deal in a more flexible way with specific issues within the general framework.

The Conference on Disarmament must also be representative of the international community. Thus, its composition has been revised several times properly to reflect new political realities. Now, once again, we have come to a crossroads where we need to reexamine the composition of the Conference on Disarmament.

In this context we particularly welcome the fact that the President of the Conference on Disarmament is conducting consultations with the members and observer delegations of the Conference on Disarmament during the present intersessional period with regard to these important issues and will report back to the Conference at the beginning of its 1993 session.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

I should like to suggest that this Committee of the General Assembly should also review the structure of its own agenda. In particular, issues related to nuclear questions warrant consideration with regard to regrouping, and so on. A more logical structure is called for.

Not many years ago non-proliferation was synonymous with the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In recent years it has become increasingly obvious that the international community must prevent the proliferation not only of nuclear weapons but of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction.

Sweden has proposed that the United Nations Disarmament Commission draw up general guidelines on non-proliferation, with particular emphasis on weapons of mass destruction. A decision should be taken this autumn to include this matter in the agenda of the Disarmament Commission. It seems to my delegation that such guidelines would be useful both on their own merits and for the work of the Conference on Disarmament. This matter should therefore also have its proper place in the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament.

Having successfully completed its work on the draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, the Conference on Disarmament has submitted the document to the General Assembly for its consideration at this year's session. It is a unique and historic document, one which provides for a global, comprehensive and verifiable Convention banning a whole category of weapons of mass destruction.

Sweden will become an original signatory of the chemical-weapons Convention. That decision was taken following a very careful study of the

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

draft text. Several of Sweden's preferred positions are not reflected in the text. However, a multilateral treaty is not likely to reflect purely national positions. It is a consensus document representing the views of a broad spectrum of States. Sweden is firmly convinced that the Convention will enhance the security of all States parties and that its provisions represent a balance and a compromise that should be acceptable to all countries.

The Convention is truly non-discriminatory. It reaches far beyond the scope of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. The Convention reiterates the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons laid down in that Protocol and further strengthens it by not accepting reservations to the articles of the Convention. It also prohibits the use of riot-control agents as a method of warfare. The States parties, furthermore, recognize the prohibition, embodied in the pertinent agreements and relevant principles of international law, of the use of herbicides as a method of warfare. This understanding was further strenghened through the Final Declaration of the Second Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (ENMOD) recently held at Geneva.

The verification regime of the Convention constitutes, in the opinion of the Swedish Government, a carefully crafted balance. It enhances confidence through an elaborate system of verifying compliance with the treaty. It deters potential violators from non-compliance and at the same time protects legitimate national-security interests of States parties. Thus, sensitive information, data and installations not related to this Convention would not have to be disclosed. It gives States parties the right to request that a challenge inspection be carried out by the international Organization. Again, with the balance I have just referred to, it also ensures States parties the

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

right to have inspections conducted in the least intrusive manner possible to permit the protection of legitimate national-security interests.

The chemical-weapons Convention furthermore contains the undertaking to declare relevant national chemical industry installations and provides for routine inspections of these installations by the Organization.

In August the Australian Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament stated on behalf of the members of the Australia Group that the strengthening of world security which will derive from the effective implementation of this Convention should be accompanied by increased cooperation between States. Sweden, as a country heavily dependent on world trade, welcomes such increased cooperation.

The Swedish Government appeals to all States Members of the United Nations to sign and ratify this important Convention to ensure that a whole category of weapons of mass destruction will now be outlawed.

Sweden has for many years criticized the biological-weapons Convention for its lack of provisions to ensure compliance and to deter non-compliance with the Convention. It is of the outmost importance to have a technical and scientific analysis of possible verification measures when all States Parties to the biological-weapons Convention in the future will have to consider specific verification measures under the Convention. An important step towards a verification regime for the Convention has been taken with the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts. At its first meeting the Group succeeded in identifying a list of possible verification measures. At the next meeting, in November this year, the Group will start the evaluation and examination of those listed measures, singly or in combination, in accordance with its mandate. By the end of 1993 the Group will report on its

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

conclusions. Sweden will continue to participate in and contribute actively to the work of the Group of Governmental Experts.

As has been stressed many times, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the efforts to curb proliferation of nuclear weapons. Twenty-two years after its entry into force, it continues to attract growing international support. With the recent accession of China and France to the Treaty, all nuclear-weapon States and permanent members of the Security Council are now parties to the Treaty. It is encouraging that newly independent States consider the Treaty to be of great importance. For several countries, one of their first international undertakings has been to become a party to the Treaty. These developments are indeed encouraging. They prove that the principle of non-proliferation of nuclear weaoons is firmly established in international conduct.

Although the NPT now has more than 150 signatories, it has not yet gained universal adherence. Sweden therefore strongly appeals to all States to become parties to the Treaty and hopes for the longest possible extension of the Treaty in 1995.

Sweden's views on a complete test ban are well known. We are firm in our belief that a comprehensive test-ban is the most effective way to ensure real nuclear disarmament. The fact remains that a verifiable and comprehensive test-ban treaty would serve as an important tool against the proliferation of nuclear weapons and would promote development towards a nuclear-weapon-free world.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

The United States of America and the Russian Federation have decided on substantial cuts in their nuclear forces. It is Sweden's sincere hope that this trend will continue and that the road will lead toward irreversible nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, there has been a gradual reduction in the number of nuclear tests carried out in the world. Sweden welcomes the decisions of Russia and France to halt temporarily all testing of nuclear weapons and hopes that these moratoriums will be extended. In particular, we call for the immediate closing of testing facilities in areas where the environment is especially sensitive. We also welcome the recent decision by the United States of America on a moratorium. It is our hope that these recent developments will lead to a total ban on nuclear tests.

The case of Iraq demonstrates that adherence to the NPT is unfortunately not enough in itself to prevent States from obtaining a nuclear capability. The international community must seek to ensure that the NPT is both adhered to and implemented in letter and spirit. Safeguards must be further improved and the International Atomic Energy Agency further strengthened.

It must also be noted in this context that nuclear-weapon-free zones, agreed upon by all States in the regions concerned, serve as important confidence-building measures, promoting non-proliferation at large.

Another nuclear-related issue of great importance is that of the prohibition of attacks against nuclear facilities. Efforts to tackle this problem in the most efficient manner must continue.

It is of capital importance that the efforts of the international community aimed at nuclear disarmament continue with undiminished vigour. Alongside these efforts, increased attention must also be given to the dangers of excessive and destabilizing build-ups of conventional arms. The Gulf War has amply shown the tragic consequences of an unbridled accumulation of arms,

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particularly in regions of tension. Exporters as well as importers of arms must exercise restraint. Also, secrecy and misapprehensions must give way to transparency and confidence. Against this background, Sweden last year co-sponsored the draft resolution on "Transparency in armaments".

It is gratifying to note that the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms has now been established, and that a panel of experts has produced a consensus report, submitted by the Secretary-General to this year's session of the General Assembly. Further important steps have thereby been taken with a view to promoting transparency in armaments. The Swedish Government will continue to take an active interest in this matter. It urges all United Nations Member States to contribute to the effective functioning of the Register by providing all relevant information in accordance with the resolution.

The resolution also requested the Conference on Disarmament to address, inter alia, the question of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production, and to elaborate means to increase openness and transparency in this field. As indicated in this year's report of the Conference on Disarmament to the General Assembly, the Conference, during its 1992 session under the agenda item "Transparency in armaments", addressed these questions in a series of informal meetings. The preliminary considerations of the agenda item have created a good basis for the continued work of the Conference in this field in 1993. These questions should, however, henceforward be treated in the more formal framework of an ad hoc committee.

An encouraging step towards increased transparency in the military field was also taken earlier this year at the substantive meeting of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. The Commission adopted a set of substantial

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters. These guidelines establish the responsibility of all States to provide objective information on military matters and their right of access to such information. They furthermore state that, as an important confidence-building measure, the provision of objective information on military matters can both promote and, in turn, be promoted by improvement in the political climate among States concerned. The Disarmament Commission recommends, inter alia, that the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms should be operated and further developed on the basis of the relevant resolution of the General Assembly and the process set out in that resolution.

The General Assembly will at this year's session address draft resolutions concerning both the Secretary-General's report on the continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the "Guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters". The Swedish Government hopes that these two draft resolutions will enjoy the widest possible support. In our view, they constitute important elements in the efforts of the international community to tackle the question of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms. They should promote openness and transparency in the military field and thereby contribute to greater confidence between States and a more peaceful and secure world.

The achievements within the field of disarmament over the last few years, particularly the significant cuts in the nuclear arsenals and the draft Convention on chemical weapons, have been remarkable and clearly indicate the profound changes that have taken place in the international climate. Let us make use of the given momentum. There are many concrete tasks ahead of us, in particular a comprehensive test-ban treaty, a verification system regarding the Convention on biological weapons, measures to curb the proliferation of

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

weapons of mass destruction, and increased transparency in armaments. Progress on these issues will gradually build up confidence and pave the way towards real disarmament.*

Mr. KARHILO (Finland): I feel privileged to speak in this Committee under your chairmanship, Sir. I appreciate from personal experience your active and constructive role in promoting disarmament as the representative of Egypt at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and now here in New York. Let me also congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election.

I must also take this opportunity to extend the heartfelt condolences of the people and Government of Finland to the people and Government of Egypt on the terrible losses they have suffered as a consequence of the devastating earthquake two days ago.

It has been a good year for disarmament. Negotiations on the Convention on chemical weapons have been successfully completed. The Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START Treaty) is on its way to multilateral implementation. As a follow-on, even deeper unilateral cuts have been announced by Presidents Bush and Yeltsin. The Open Skies regime is becoming a reality. Nuclear testing is on the wane through unilateral moratoriums. Under the Vienna Document of 1992, a new and comprehensive package of confidence- and security-building measures is being implemented from the Atlantic to the Urals. As agreed at the Helsinki summit of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, a new European Security Forum has been established.

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* The Chairman returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

After 25 years, the Treaty of Tlatelolco is beginning to fulfil its promise of a nuclear-weapon-free Latin America. With the accession of South Africa and its neighbours to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), prospects for a denuclearized Africa seem better than ever before.

While these positive developments should not induce complacency, they should be fully appreciated. They are true steps towards a more secure world.

Tragically, the decrease in global tensions has released pent-up regional and internal tensions. Conventional war, mindless destruction and wholesale violations of human rights have returned to Europe in the guise of "ethnic cleansing". A deadly combination of explosive hatreds and a surfeit of arms is causing untold suffering for millions in the former Yugoslavia, the Caucasus and Somalia. One lesson is clear: there is a need from the outset to integrate disarmament with preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping practised by the United Nations and regional organizations.

Even in the post-cold-war environment, global problems remain. High among our priorities is the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Recent experience suggests the need for increased vigilance and prompt international action. Would-be proliferators would be well advised to keep in mind what the Security Council, meeting last January at the highest level, stated for the first time, and in no uncertain terms: the proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

The draft chemical weapons Convention will play a key role in doing away with one category of weapons of mass destruction and in keeping them away forever. As far as biological weapons are concerned, the 1972 Convention will

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

need to be strengthened, especially with regard to verification. Finland is participating actively in that effort.

On nuclear non-proliferation, the cornerstone of all international efforts continues to be the non-proliferation Treaty. The Treaty is fast approaching universality in its membership. The fact that all five permanent members of the Security Council are now parties is particularly welcome. We call on those few who remain outside to come in from the cold. Our goal for the 1995 NPT conference is indefinite extension of the life of the Treaty.

Massive destruction can be wrought by simple means. Last year the world watched in horror when Kuwaiti oil wells were deliberately torched by Iraq as a means of war. The environmental effects have been long-lasting, widespread and severe. The issue of protection of the environment in times of armed conflict has gained new urgency. Clearly, there is a need to address effectively the kind of low-technology environmental warfare waged during the Gulf War of 1991. If this can be done through existing international instruments, so much the better.

Just last month the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (ENMOD) was reviewed by its States parties. Finland is pleased that the Second Review Conference agreed that the scope of the ENMOD Convention covers any environmental modification techniques the use of which fits the criteria set out in the Convention. The fact that herbicides, surely to be considered low-technology implements of war, are specifically referred to in this connection is also helpful.

More clarity as to the scope and application of the ENMOD Convention is required, however. The Convention provides a ready mechanism through which

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

such clarity can be sought. Finland and the other Nordic countries are already on record on this issue. In their statement to the Sixth Committee two weeks ago, the Nordic countries supported the view that such a clarification by the Consultative Committee of Experts provided for under the ENMOD Convention is desirable. During this session of the General Assembly Finland will consult with other interested States parties about the follow-up to the Second Review Conference.

At this session the General Assembly will endorse a historic achievement in the field of disarmament. The process of arriving at the draft chemical weapons Convention took more than 20 years. Better late than never - although we are convinced that the option in fact was "now or never". The moment had to be seized, and it was seized. The happy outcome was the result of efforts by all participating delegations. However, I would be less than fair if I did not single out the pivotal role played by Ambassador Ritter von Wagner of Germany in the home stretch of these efforts. As Chairman, he had what it takes: the steely determination to coax everyone - not just a large majority, but everyone - into agreement. Finland warmly congratulates him and his team on a worthy job well done.

The draft chemical weapons Convention is a true milestone in international disarmament efforts. Not only does it ban a whole category of weapons of mass destruction, but it provides for the elimination of existing arsenals and for the non-production of new ones under extensive and intrusive verification provisions, the first of their kind in a multilateral treaty. And the overall treaty regime is in balance. It matches the demand for effectiveness and objectivity with the demand that it be non-discriminatory in character.

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

The litmus test for the draft Convention will be adherence. The aim here must be universality. The benefits to global and regional security are largely dependent on wide adherence. A major possessor remaining outside the Convention could ruin it world wide. Any known or suspected possessor or aspirant remaining outside could ruin it regionally.

In regions such as the Middle East, special arrangements outside the Convention may well be called for so as to secure wide adherence. A joint announcement by regional States of their intention to become States parties could be a start. Unrelated problems, however serious, should not be made to burden the Convention or be dressed up as non-acceptance of its details.

It is heartening to note that the draft resolution on the draft chemical weapons Convention will have a record number of sponsors. We urge those who have not yet become sponsors to do so. In view of the overwhelming support already evident in this Committee, it would be appropriate to adopt the draft resolution by consensus. Of course, in any case, the General Assembly will send a powerful message to those who need to hear it that the draft Convention in its entirety is acceptable to the international community.

Finland is convinced that the draft chemical weapons Convention will strengthen international peace and security. The Convention will become a standard by which all countries are judged, whether they are parties or not.

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

The conclusion of the chemical weapons Convention has brought to an end one era in the history of international disarmament efforts. While the profound changes in world politics certainly facilitated the outcome in the case of chemical weapons, their broader impact has been kept, to a large extent, outside the chambers where international disarmament diplomacy has been conducted for the past 15 years.

The time has now come to open the doors again and let in the fresh winds of change. The time has now come to act on the consequences of the demise of the old order and see whether the international disarmament agenda and machinery created in 1978 can meet the new challenges of a new era.

There is a need to take a hard look at the Conference on Disarmament in particular. It is, after all, there to negotiate for all of us, even if all of us are not members.

We are gratified to note that soul-searching has begun at the Conference itself. That is as it should be. In the end, it is the Conference that must reform itself. As an observer who has taken a keen interest in the Conference on Disarmament for a long time, let me offer the following thoughts.

We now live in a world where security threats are both diffuse and differentiated. Old security concerns, such as proliferation, have acquired new dimensions and urgency. New concerns, such as the safe handling, storage and dismantling of nuclear weapons in large numbers, have emerged. As during the cold war, the countries most directly involved and affected may well achieve good results of global significance on their own. Even so, the very nature of many of the new concerns calls for wider participation in the efforts to deal with them. Otherwise, the results might not stick. It is very important to give all those States that are able and willing to contribute to

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

those efforts an equal chance of doing so. The idea of opening up the Conference on Disarmament to all States that apply for membership seems to us well worth pursuing with vigour.

At the same time the work of the Conference needs to be focused carefully. The fact that it took more than 20 years to achieve the chemical weapons Convention is not an achievement. In the future, the international community might be better served by intensive efforts on a limited number of issues of immediate security concern than by near-eternal negotiations on exceedingly complex conventions or on esoteric topics on which progress is neither possible nor truly needed.

The one important remaining item on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament is the nuclear test-ban. Work is well advanced. The technical barriers to verification can be overcome. The political barriers are crumbling. A treaty should now be negotiated without further delay or distraction through consideration of alternative processes.

In the meantime, the unilateral moratoriums should continue. We call upon Russia and France to renew theirs before the end of the year and upon China to begin to heed the restraint already shown by the other nuclear-weapon States.

Possible resumption of nuclear testing on Novaya Zemlya is of particular concern to Finland and the other Nordic countries. The fragile Arctic environment should not be put at risk for the sake of dubious military benefits.

While the Conference on Disarmament as a negotiating body deserves particular attention, the other parts of the international disarmament machinery and their agendas should not escape critical scrutiny. There is

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

great ferment in the United Nations as our Organization approaches its fiftieth anniversary. Reform is in the air.

Disarmament, broadly understood, has a key role to play in the service of peace, whether preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping or post-conflict peace-building. Traditional disarmament negotiations serve to deter conflict. Recent experience from around the world suggests that disarmament can serve peace-keeping and peace-building in many ways, from de-mining, data exchange and inspection to weapons removal, demobilization and conversion.

Recent experience also suggests that the United Nations can play an effective role in identifying and destroying weapons of mass destruction. The activities of the United Nations Special Commission could provide guidance for further innovation in the event that similar operations are required by the international community in the future.

The United Nations has also taken important steps towards greater transparency in military matters. Finland fully supports the budget reporting system and the new Register of Conventional Arms.

However, the United Nations disarmament agenda, our proper concern in this Committee, is largely silent on the exciting developments and opportunities of the post-cold-war era. It is time to begin the process of forging a new agenda for a new era.

The times were special enough in 1978 for the General Assembly to convene the first-ever special session on disarmament. Perhaps the times are special enough now to start thinking about convening the first post-cold-war special session on disarmament.

It has long been repeated that the United Nations has a central role to play in international disarmament efforts. That mantra reflected wishful thinking more than it did hard reality.

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

The United Nations now has a unique opportunity to begin to play a central role in disarmament, if the Member States will it. I trust that they do. The cold war is but a painful memory. Things should be different now.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (Australia): Allow me first of all to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. Your years as an active practitioner of multilateral diplomacy equip you perfectly for the responsible position you now occupy, and I should like to assure you of the full support of the Australian delegation.

I should also like to express to you the sympathy of the Australian Government and our delegation here to the victims of the recent tragic earthquake in Cairo.

I should also like to recognize our colleague and friend from Geneva, Ambassador Beresetegui, who has made a great contribution to this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament, as well as Mr. Davinic and Mr. Kheradi, upon whose efforts we constantly rely.

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

Since the First Committee last met in the last months of 1991, there have been continuing consequences of the ending of the cold war, which have produced a variety of changes in the international security environment. The most dramatic of these have been the disappearance of the Soviet Union and the outbreak of vicious ethnic wars in the former Yugoslavia. Less dramatic, but no less profound, has been the continuing reassessment of foreign policies by many Governments as they have grappled with the new environment and its precise implications for national security. The past year seems to have generated a sense that international security has improved because of the dramatic reductions in super-Power tensions and the consequent reduction of their nuclear arsenals, but at the same time many difficult and dangerous security challenges remain and, indeed, new ones have emerged.*

Taken overall, 1992 has been a notable year in the areas of security, arms control and disarmament policy. There have been very welcome steps to curb and reverse the nuclear-arms race. Australia warmly welcomes in particular the drastic reductions in size and in the configuration of the nuclear arsenals of the United States of America and of Russia, in particular the agreement at the June summit this year to make further dramatic cuts between now and the year 2003. While recognizing the complexity of this destruction and dismantlement process, we look forward to even greater cuts being foreshadowed further down the track. We welcome as well the decline in the number of nuclear tests and note with support that France, Russia and the United States all now have a moratorium in place. Like other speakers this

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* Mr. Patokallio (Finland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

morning, we would welcome an indefinite continuation of those moratoriums, and we look forward to beginning negotiation of a treaty in the Conference on Disarmament that would codify a ban on all such tests for all time and in all environments.

Important steps have been taken to strengthen the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), but more remains to be done. In addition there has been much needed action to tighten nuclear export controls and to establish full-scope safeguards as the international standard for the supply of nuclear items.

At the regional level there have been a number of positive developments over the past year. South Africa has completed its safeguards arrangements under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In the wake of important agreements between Argentina and Brazil, the members of the Treaty of Tlatelolco have begun to work to bring the treaty into force. Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan have made important commitments to join the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States, and we urge other new independent States of the former Soviet Union that have not yet done so to join the NPT.

An arms-control dialogue has commenced among parties to the Middle East peace process, which is a fundamental step towards resolving the security problems of the region. However, we remain deeply concerned by Iraq's failure to comply with its IAEA safeguards agreement and with United Nations Security Council resolutions and urge Iraq to live up to the letter and the spirit of its international obligations.

On the Korean peninsula there have also been some positive developments. We have been encouraged by the belated conclusion of a safeguards agreement with the IAEA by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its acceptance

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

of Agency inspections, but the process is not yet complete. Australia looks forward to the early and full implementation of the safeguards agreement by the Demoratic People's Republic of Korea. Another crucial step in developing a climate of confidence in the north Asia region will be the establishment of an effective bilateral inspection regime between North and South Korea.

The cautious but important disarmament process being undertaken on the Korean peninsula gives ground for hoping for disarmament progress in other hitherto intractable flashpoints in Australia's broader region, notably the subcontinent. We have been encouraged by recent indications, especially in the India-Pakistan joint declaration relating to chemical-weapon matters, that certain bilateral issues with important regional and global implications are being addressed with a new sense of determination and of the opportunities for progress that the current international environment represents. We hope that that development will lead to a more active dialogue on nuclear matters between India and Pakistan with the aim of eliminating the prospects of a nuclear arms race in South Asia.

In South-East Asia and the Pacific, Australia welcomes the growing attention being given to regional consideration of security-policy issues of common concern to specific countries. To some extent our common experience of grappling - and continuing to grapple - with the thorny issues in the way of assisting the Cambodian people in bringing peace to their land has sensitized Australia and its regional colleagues to the potential role that dialogue, multilateral solutions and concrete confidence-building measures can play in the future in dealing with such concerns. There could be a place in contemporary circumstances for regions and subregions to bring their disarmament energy to bear on solving important outstanding regional issues

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necessarily left unsolved and unattended in a world preoccupied with a broader balance between the super-Powers. The process is initially one of dialogue encouraging a home-grown and relevant security policy emerging from equal members of a particular region. This is the nature of the security dialogue to which Australia is committed in its immediate region and one that we trust will ripen and mature in the coming years.

It seems to Australia that there is great potential for the multilateral and global disarmament process being matched and underpinned at regional and subregional levels. The development of appropriate and authentically regional frameworks will not be impeded by lack of models to adapt to specific regional needs and circumstances. The post-ministerialal conference of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), for example, has evolved into a very valuable forum for regional-security dialogue, bringing the countries of ASEAN together with six other Asia-Pacific States and the European Community representative. A wide range of building blocks present themselves from both multilateral global régimes and security arrangements in other regions. Australia is greatly attracted, therefore, to the view that a grass-roots approach to regional security issues should be considered.

The importance of containing the spread of nuclear weapons for international security cannot be overstated. To date, the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has been extraordinarly effective in doing so, and Australia will be working for the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995. We look forward to participating actively in the preparatory-committee process that will be launched by a resolution to be adopted at this session of the General Assembly.

Progress over the past year in eliminating the threat from weapons of mass destruction has not only been made in the nuclear field. There has been

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

a historic step forward with the conclusion of the chemical weapons Convention. On behalf of the Australian Government, I wish to record our appreciation of the great effort and successful leadership of Ambassador von Wagner of Germany at the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons of the Conference on Disarmament. Australia is, of course, an original sponsor of the resolution adopting that Convention and looks forward to its becoming a consensus resolution of this Committee and of this Assembly. Australia urges all States to support the resolution and to assemble in Paris next January to sign it and subsequently to begin the work of its preparatory commission.

Australia has been giving some further thought to how the Treaty can be implemented in the most effective and widely supported manner. We believe that a sustained effort will be required to draw Governments in all regions and from all political groups into the framework of the Convention, thereby making it truly global.

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

We intend to continue our own efforts in South-East Asia and the South Pacific to that end. Australia's Foreign Minister, Senator Evans, has told countries of South-East Asia and the South Pacific that Australia stands ready to assist them with the implementation of the chemical weapons Convention. We will be approaching our regional friends shortly to discuss with them how to bring the Convention into force in our region at the earliest possible date and thus reinforce the strong stand the region has already taken against these weapons.

We believe an outreach to industry will also be required in order to ensure that the delicate balance in the Convention between political and military security on the one hand and commercial enhancement on the other is sustained. We welcome the repeated statements of support for the Convention by the leading chemical industry associations. We believe a substantial public activity will be required of the preparatory commission and the provisional technical secretariat to raise awareness of the benefits the Convention will convey and to ensure that its promise of expanded economic and technical cooperation is appreciated and realized. It is obvious that the provisional technical secretariat will require a significant effort by way of institution-building and administration.

At the last session of the General Assembly, Australia suggested that there would be benefit, once the Convention is concluded, in having an early meeting of the heads of national chemical-weapons-Convention secretariats, and today we repeat that suggestion. We believe that, by about mid-1993, the provisional secretariat of the organization for the prevention of chemical weapons should be in a position to convene such a meeting in conjunction with a plenary meeting of the preparatory commission. Such a meeting might help to ensure that the Convention is being implemented in a uniform way and provide

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an opportunity for States to register any difficulties they are having in complying with the requirements of the Convention. Such a meeting would also be able to identify appropriate assistance for any State signatory that wished to receive it.

As the Convention is carried into its implementation phase, Australia continues to emphasize the need for regional cooperation, since the political, security and commercial benefits of the Convention are likely to be realized most clearly in regional contexts. Australia also sees the need for careful adherence to the schedule of chemical weapons destruction, so that the fundamental deal contained in the Convention is honoured: Those that have chemical weapons will destroy them; those that do not have them will not acquire them. Hence, a world without chemical weapons will be achieved.

The achievement of the chemical weapons Convention is good news for national, regional and international security. It is good news for lowering the level of these armaments and hence is a practical and useful example of arms control and disarmament. It is good for the precedent it sets since it will be a model of how cooperation in sensitive areas of national security can be achieved with effective verification and with commercial and economic cooperation improved for all States that choose to join it.

The conclusion of the chemical weapons Convention raises the issue of how to give a more practical and product-oriented cast to the work of the Conference on Disarmament. Australia is pleased, therefore, that the Conference President, Ambassador Servais of Belgium, is conducting consultations about the composition, agenda and working methods of the Conference on Disarmament. Permit me to comment on these particular matters.

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

A major issue is that of composition. We have just listened to a very eloquent presentation on this matter from the representative of Finland. It seems to us that there is no simple answer to this question, a fact to which our years of attempting to agree on modalities for expanding the Conference can attest. We are faced with a number of options. All States which are interested and which are prepared to commit the resources to contribute effectively to the Conference could be admitted as full participants. The opening up of the Conference in this way would send a positive signal about a new climate in arms control and disarmament. The membership could be expanded by a limited number, perhaps on the basis of current observers. This would allow countries with a demonstrated interest to participate more fully in the work of the Conference. The membership could be maintained at approximately 40 members, but the current membership could be reviewed in the light of new political realities. This would ensure that the Conference was truly and accurately representative of the international community. Lastly, another option would be the maintenance of the status quo. While perhaps not perfect, the current Conference on Disarmament membership reflects the consensus of many years and has a wide and varied representation based on competence, disarmament credentials, and geographical considerations.

In weighing up these options we have to balance the desirability of limiting the numbers in a negotiation, in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness, with the attraction of having as many members of the international community as are interested participating in the important work of the Conference on Disarmament. Given this dilemma, it is difficult to come down in support of any one particular option without careful deliberation and discussion by members and non-members alike. We suggest, therefore, that during the course of the current session of the First Committee, a meeting of

(Mr. O'Sullivan, Australia)

interested States Members of the United Nations be convened by the Conference President to exchange views on the future of the Conference, including its composition, agenda and working methods.

With respect to the agenda, we support a practical programme of work that can produce clear, useful achievements. For 1993, we believe the emphasis should be first and foremost on a comprehensive test ban, as well as on a unified statement on negative security assurances, cessation of the production of fissionable material, prevention of an arms race in outer space, and transparency in armaments. We are especially interested in seeing the issue of destabilizing and excessive transfers of conventional arms better managed by the international community. This means a clearer and better constructed resolution of this Assembly and - as Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden mentioned a few minutes ago - an ad hoc committee in the Conference on Disarmament next year.

On the question of working methods, we think the time has come for a more flexible and better targeted approach to allocating time in the Conference on Disarmament to the various elements in the programme of work. This means giving more concentration to subjects on which progress is available, and less attention to symbolic issues. It is important that the current and incoming Presidents be consulted about this matter, since it should be possible to find a pragmatic arrangement that lets the Conference on Disarmament get on with its work.

Finally, we would like some consideration of the working methods of the First Committee of the General Assembly. We welcome, in this context, the merging of the disarmament and security items. Not only should this increase our efficiency, but it also underscores the vital role disarmament measures can play in promoting security both regionally and globally. The separation

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of the items was, in our view, an artificial one, and we are pleased that it has been rectified. Now that this merger has been effected we wonder whether a five-week session would be sufficient. We support greater efforts to meld competing items on the same subject. For instance, the resolutions on various aspects of regional security could be aggregated, and we support more effort to biennialize resolutions that keep on coming up.

Australia believes that we have an excellent opportunity to construct better structures within the United Nations system for the promotion of arms control and disarmament. In this new environment, we must resolve to address such opportunities with determination and mutual respect.

Mr. KHARRAZI (Islamic Republic of Iran): First of all, let me join other delegations in expressing sincere condolences and sympathy to the people of Egypt over the disastrous earthquake, which has caused death and destruction in that country. My country has already announced its readiness to lend its experience and provide relief assistance through its national Red Crescent Society.

I should like to express my congratulations to Mr. Elaraby on his election as Chairman of the First Committee. We are confident that the First Committee will benefit greatly from his vast diplomatic skills and knowledge of international affairs, particularly in the areas of disarmament and international security issues. I should also like to express my delegation's sincere gratitude to his predecessor, Mr. Mroziewicz of Poland, for the masterful manner in which he guided the proceedings of the Committee at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Let me also take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, and the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Sohrab Kheradi.

The recent profound and truly unprecedented developments in the international arena continue to alter the structure and functioning of the international political environment. Now, as the world moves beyond the cold war era, the necessity of restructuring a new security order for the world has been widely recognized. For several decades erroneous approaches, such as nuclear parity and nuclear deterrence, dominated world politics and resulted simply in intensifying the arms race and militarization throughout the world. Obviously, under such circumstances the common interests of the international community were easily overlooked. Therefore, it is now imperative to erect

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new security premises for the world within which to diminish future threats to global stability and to enhance justice, equality and genuine peace and security.

The emergence of an almost-bewildering array of opportunities and challenges in the wake of disintegration of bipolarity underscores the enormousness of the tasks that confront the international community in this regard.

Undoubtedly, the First Committee, which represents an appropriate international forum to deal with disarmament and international security issues, in tandem with other relevant multilateral bodies, can play its due role in defining and articulating the concepts and elements required to build viable global peace and security.

With bloc-confrontation no longer dominating the international political landscape, the quest for enduring global peace and security has gained compelling momentum. The significant transformation in East-West relations has yielded positive results, in particular with respect to solidifying the arms control and disarmament agenda. Nevertheless, emerging challenges, including the widening North-South gap and the eruption of ethnic and racial conflicts, remind us that we must avoid letting perceptions run ahead of reality. Indeed, there is an urgent need to buttress international security by addressing endemic and destabilizing problems, among which one can highlight widening disrespect for the rights of nations, violation of the sovereignty of States, widespread poverty, hunger and underdevelopment, as well as new instances of consolidation of domination and hegemony - all of which remain inimical to the realization of common human ideals, particularly universal peace, security and balanced prosperity and welfare. Needless to

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say, ignoring or dismissing the destabilizing consequences of such problems, which pose serious threats to international security and global stability, would be a grave mistake.

In this regard, the Secretary-General, in his report on the work of the Organization, emphasizes that it is unacceptable that absolute poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy and hopelessness be the lot of one-fifth of the world's population. Moreover, Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement at their recent Summit Conference, emphasized that the widening gap between the North and the South has become the central threat to international security and stability. Therefore, the quest for peace and security will be futile if hunger and disease continue to stalk many lands and afflict large segments of the world's population.

No less ominous are the dangers created by the flare-ups of ethnic and racial conflicts, which have made the task of strengthening global security all the more complex. The tragic situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a prime example of this contention. The crimes perpetrated against the people of that country have shocked the human consciousness. Serb nationalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina have conducted a campaign of genocide and "ethnic cleansing", in particular against the Muslim population, with the full support and backing of Serbia and Montenegro. My delegation is of the conviction that the Security Council must adopt the necessary measures, provided for in Article 42 of the Charter, to reverse the aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, thus putting an end to the aggression and restoring the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The establishment of a war-crimes tribunal is a positive step in the right direction.

(Mr. Kharrazi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

Given these alarming, yet mutually reinforcing challenges, it goes without saying that in an ever-more-interdependent world the maintenance of global peace and security needs concerted and sustained efforts by all members of the international community - efforts that must be characterized by forward-looking approaches and all-encompassing measures. It is evident that the objectives of confidence-building measures, arms control and the disarmament agenda cannot be achieved in isolation. Indeed, recent achievements in the area of arms control and disarmament, most notably the preparation of a draft Convention on the prohibition of the production, development, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons, can be further strengthened by ensuring and facilitating progress in other areas, some of which I enumerated earlier.

It is of paramount importance that, after long years of difficult, even painstaking, negotiations among the members of the Conference on Disarmament, the multilateral efforts to eliminate a horrendous class of weapons - namely chemical weapons that were used in the past and particularly in the 1980s - have been brought to fruition. Because of repeated use of these weapons against our people, perhaps no nation on Earth is more enthusiastic than Iran about having such a ban on the production, development, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons put into effect through the implementation of this multilateral Convention.

In this spirit, the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran actively participated in and contributed to the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons and made its utmost effort to facilitate the conclusion of a strong, verifiable, effective, solid and comprehensive Convention.

(Mr. Kharazzi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

We acknowledge with appreciation the efforts of Ambassador Adolf Von Wagner of Germany, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. However, as was emphasized by the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran in his statement before the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly,

> "on the one hand, because the Conference on Disarmament acts on the basis of consensus and, on the other, owing to the supremacy of political exigencies throughout the process, but especially during the latter stages [the draft convention] cannot be regarded as a document that reflects the principled views and positions of all the members of the Conference on Disarmament". (A/47/PV.5, p.49)

This is particularly true, in the view of my delegation, in the case of the definition of chemical weapons, the composition of the Executive Council, and the economic and technological development and co-operation in the chemical sector.

As regards the definition, it is crystal-clear that the definition in article II of the draft convention is the most fundamental part of the convention, as the whole body of the convention is built upon this definition. Munitions, submunitions, devices and equipment that have been tagged as being chemical weapons throughout the text, however, suffer from a total lack of elaboration, as well as scope of application. Therefore the extensive definition for toxic chemicals is not balanced by at least a minimum clarification of munitions, submunitions, devices and equipment, thus creating tremendous problems for implementation of the convention and, more particularly, giving rise to serious difficulties in regard to challenge inspections, which in our view are essential components of the Treaty.

(Mr. Kharazzi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

With regard to the composition of the Executive Council, it is our considered view that the provisions for it are unbalanced and discriminatory. These provisions give special treatment and privilege to 16 countries that will comprise more than one third of the membership of the Executive Council. We believe that all State parties must enjoy equal opportunity to serve on the Executive Council and that no country should have special privilege. Indeed, the negotiations on the composition of the Executive Council were held in secrecy and in a non-transparent fashion by just a few countries. Despite strong opposition from some members, these provisions were inserted in the text. It is ironic that for the largest continent of the world, namely Asia, with 42 countries, the chance of State parties being elected in the Executive Council is less than 10 per cent, while for a European State the chance exceeds 22 per cent. In short, in our view, article VIII of the draft convention lacks the necessary balance and proportion.

Lack of adequate and clear provisions in the draft convention concerning the removal of discriminatory restrictions on chemical trade and exchanges between State parties encompasses yet another concern of my delegation. For the chemical convention to become universal, it is essential that the developed countries remove existing unilateral discriminatory and ad hoc restrictions on the transfer of chemical technology, materials and equipment for peaceful purposes.

In spite of these problems, our commitment to promoting the cause of international peace and security, coupled with our earnest enthusiasm for the elimination of these abhorrent weapons from the face of the earth, motivated us to co-sponsor the draft resolution calling upon all States to sign the convention at the earliest possible date. It is our sincere hope that the

(Mr. Kharazzi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

good will of State parties, particularly the industrialized ones, and the proceedings in the Preparatory Commission will help to alleviate the concerns I highlighted earlier. In this spirit we will actively participate in the work of the Preparatory Commission, as we have already demonstrated in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, to make the convention as foolproof as possible. In this connection we also urge the developing countries to contribute actively to the work of the Preparatory Commission with the aim of improving the convention in its operational phase.

We have always been a faithful proponent of the chemical weapons convention. The Iranian people have been the latest and, it is to be hoped, the last victims of the use of chemical weapons. The anguish resulting from such use cannot escape the hearts and souls of our people or, we hope, the consciences of the world.

Thus it is our fervent hope that all members of the international community will spare no effort to maximize the chance of universal adherence to the chemical convention, not only in word by in deeds as well. There is no reason for this noble goal not to become a reality if the political will exists.

The conclusion of a draft convention on chemical weapons should manifest effects in a variety of ways to facilitate progress in other areas of disarmament, nuclear disarmament in particular. The termination of the cold war era has brought with it the collapse of old nuclear doctrines manifested in nuclear deterrence or use of these weapons to enhance foreign-policy objectives: a political weapon or an equalizer. No security perception can now legitimize or explain the acquisition and stockpiling of these weapons.

(Mr. Kharazzi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

What purpose do they serve? What is the raison d'être of the acquisition or possession of nuclear weapons? Who are these weapons intended to deter? What weapons are they intended to equalize, when we are moving towards a world free of chemical weapons?

By no analysis can the existence of nuclear weapons enhance national or international security. The example of the chemical weapons convention should be geared to initiating an international endeavour to arrive at a multilateral convention to prohibit the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons. The efforts in the past decade to illegitimize the possession or use of nuclear weapons under international law should be intensified in this new international security landscape. Humanity deserves more dignity than relying on weapons to guarantee its survival. With the cold war behind us, it is incumbent upon all of us to solidify genuine efforts towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

We are of the deep conviction that multilateral efforts towards the realization of this noble and urgent goal of the international community, namely nuclear disarmament, must be strengthened. In this context my delegation supports, among other efforts, the idea of establishing an ad hoc committee within the Conference on Disarmament to achieve nuclear disarmament with an adequate and clear mandate. Such action would make multilateral progress on this vital issue all the more possible.

Pending the realization of nuclear disarmament, the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons can serve as a significant instrument for this transitional period.

(Mr. Kharrazi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

Some provisional measures should be taken as follows.

First, nuclear testing by all States in all environments must be stopped once and for all. In fact, intensive research and technical developments have provided reliable measures for the verification of the cessation of nuclear testing. Therefore, it is of the utmost priority that all nuclear-weapon States support the ongoing efforts and numerous calls of an overriding majority of States to accept an underground test ban as a necessary measure to complete the partial test-ban Treaty. We noted the moratorium declared by certain nuclear-weapon States on nuclear testing; nevertheless, my delegation believes that positive steps should be translated into more viable and concrete measures, specifically a legally binding treaty on a comprehensive ban of nuclear-weapon tests.

Secondly, effective and legally binding international arrangements should be concluded to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. In this connection, a more flexible approach on the part of nuclear-weapon States in the Conference on Disarmament, in our view, will help this multilateral body to achieve tangible progress towards the realization of this objective. The Islamic Republic of Iran, as current Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee dealing with assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, made efforts to reach that lofty goal. As a non-nuclear-weapon State - and determined not to become one - Iran attaches great significance to receiving such negative security assurances.

Thirdly, commitments undertaken by industrialized countries Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty should, under its article IV, be implemented to facilitate the availability of necessary know-how for peaceful applications of

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nuclear energy by the developing countries. Discriminatory approaches and policies that continue to be applied against developing countries Parties to the Treaty have further weakened the Treaty and have erected serious obstacles in the way of the peaceful use of nuclear energy in those countries.

As has been emphatically reiterated, global and regional approaches to disarmament complement each other and should thus be pursued simultaneously in order to promote regional and international peace and security. In this context, the establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in various regions of the world, including the Middle East, has gained increasing significance. Taking into account the volatile situation in the Middle East, the desirability of making that region devoid of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction cannot be over-emphasized. My country, which initiated the proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East in 1979, is firmly committed to achieving this valuable goal. We stand ready to lend our enthusiastic support to any genuine, comprehensive and non-discriminatory initiative for the establishment of such a zone. It is equally important to stress that the expansion of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) verification system to all nuclear facilities in our region will definitely consolidate the efforts towards this objective.*

Committed to the principle that nuclear weapons do not enhance national security objectives, the Islamic Republic of Iran has complied fully with its commitments under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In fact, an IAEA team headed by the Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Safeguards which

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* The Chairman returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Kharrazi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

visited Iran last February emphasized that Iran's activities were consistent with the peaceful application of nuclear energy.

The time has come to strengthen regional security and stability through multifaceted approaches, including the expansion of confidence-building measures concerning the seas. In this context, we believe the implementation of the provisions of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace and the realization of its objectives, among other efforts, will not only consolidate the security of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean but also enhance international security. In this respect, we noted with satisfaction the results of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean contained in document A/47/29 and call for the early convening of the Conference in Colombo for this purpose.

Over the past several years, transparency in armaments has gained its due importance on the disarmament agenda. This is not an ultimate objective per se, but it should rather serve to enhance international security as long as it remains devoid of political expediency. To guarantee the success and completion of the process which began last year in this Committee and resulted in the adoption by the General Assembly of the resolution entitled "Transparency in armaments" (46/36 L), it is essential that we strive for an integrated and non-discriminatory approach to the establishment of a universal comprehensive reporting system on armaments. Towards this end, the scope of the Register of Conventional Arms must be expanded to include weapons of mass destruction and the presence of foreign forces in various countries. Furthermore, it needs to be stressed that the notion which assumes arms-exporting States should play the pivotal role in determining the security requirements of others should be utterly avoided.

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The need to build a solid foundation for global security is a real one. We should be prepared to bear our share of responsibility at this crucial stage. The results of our endeavours here can serve as the building blocks of that foundation and could contribute to the realization of the goal of international security and disarmament, provided we do not lose sight of essentials and priorities based upon the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. AZIKIWE (Nigeria): On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I wish to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau on your well-deserved elections. Nigeria and Egypt maintain excellent relations. Indeed, I personally had the privilege of working very closely with you, Sir, in Geneva before you took up your current assignment in New York. I have no doubt that under your wise guidance this Committee will contribute significantly towards the realization of our common goals.

My delegation learned with deep regret of the earthquake that took place in Cairo two days ago. May I, through you, convey to the Government and the people of Egypt Nigeria's heartfelt condolences. We share with you that experience of tragic loss of lives and property.

(Mr. Azikiwe, Nigeria)

The forty-seventh session of the General Assembly is being held against the background of renewed hope that the interrelated questions of genuine international peace, security, disarmament and development can be achieved. At this time of profound and rapid changes, no member State can afford to be isolated from the mainstream of global developments. In this world of growing interdependence, it is imperative that we effectively undertake collective measures for the prevention and removal of all threats to international peace and security. Barely a year ago the international community was buoyed with optimism that the world was on the verge of a new era of peace. In spite of the positive developments, lasting peace and security are still elusive. Severe setbacks, with the alarming succession of fratricidal conflicts, have clearly demonstrated that we are still living in a dangerous world.

The world is faced with new forms of threats. Ethnic, religious, boundary and nationalist conflicts pervade almost all regions. These conflicts are rapidly undermining the very limited gains that have been achieved in the sphere of disarmament. When these crises are addressed, the degree of global concern over a particular conflict should not depend on its perceived impact on national or multinational interests. The response to such conflicts must be based on enforcement of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. No dispute that triggers human tragedy of immense proportion should be considered marginal because the vital interests of the strong and powerful are not directly concerned.

Nigeria does not possess nuclear weapons, nor do we intend to pursue the ambition to possess them, as we are convinced that the arms race represents an unnecessary and unjustifiable waste of scarce resources that could be channelled towards development. In a world free of ideological rivalry, the

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doctrine of nuclear deterrence has become outdated and irrelevant. The time has now come for a new security structure based on the collective survival of mankind.

Since the forty-sixth session we have seen remarkable disarmament initiatives undertaken by, among others, the nuclear-weapon States. We wish to commend especially the recent disarmament initiatives by the Russian Federation and the United States of America to make significant reductions in their nuclear arsenals. They need, however, to go beyond current efforts and attain still deeper cuts in those arsenals. We commend France and the Russian Federation for their decision to declare a moratorium on nuclear tests and call on other nuclear-weapon States to make similar declarations. We note the United States Government's decision to suspend nuclear tests until the end of June 1993.

Progress has also been recorded in other areas of nuclear disarmament. We welcome in particular the accession of China to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We also recognize other positive developments, including the agreement on the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. It is essential that the agreement be implemented speedily. Similarly, we commend Argentina and Brazil for the Declaration on the peaceful uses of their nuclear programmes. We note with satisfaction that South Africa has entered into a full-scope safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It is our belief that the full implementation of this agreement would facilitate the implementation of the Declaration on the denuclearization of the African continent.

Recent developments in the area of nuclear disarmament have no doubt created a positive climate for the promotion of dialogue on the extension of

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the non-proliferation Treaty. Further efforts should be made to enhance the confidence of non-nuclear-weapon States in the NPT regime. One such effort should be the cessation of all nuclear tests before the 1995 extension conference. In addition, the Conference on Disarmament should begin credible negotiations on the attainment of the long sought comprehensive test-ban treaty. As we look forward to the review and extension conference, nuclear-weapon States have the primary responsibility to break the present impasse in the Conference on Disarmament over the issue of a negotiating mandate for the Ad Hoc Committee on Nuclear Test Ban. The comprehensive test-ban treaty is the linchpin of the NPT, and there cannot be genuine reversal of the nuclear-arms race without it. The existence of nuclear weapons poses the greatest threat to mankind. We therefore believe that nuclear disarmament remains the most important item on the agenda of our forum.

Last year many delegations called for the speedy conclusion of negotiations on the chemical weapons convention. We commend the successful conclusion of the draft Convention, whose objective is a universal, non-discriminatory and comprehensive regime prohibiting the production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer and use of chemical weapons. This demonstrates the determination of the international community to contribute effectively towards the realization of this important disarmament measure, in the conviction that all weapons of mass destruction must be totally banned.

Nigeria has always felt that the risk of the use of chemical weapons cannot be eliminated through partial measures such as non-proliferation agreements, since this will encourage the retention of such weapons in the

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arsenals of those States that already possess them. While recognizing that the draft Convention on chemical weapons is not perfect, it is none the less a compromise text after long and intensive negotiations. We believe that with sufficient transparency and goodwill on all sides, the Convention can - as indeed it must - be implemented without any ambiguities and in a manner that does not impede the legitimate activities of chemical industries, especially in developing countries.

Nigeria will sign the Convention and we appeal to all Member States to do the same. In anticipation of General Assembly approval of the Convention, Nigeria is putting in place structures for the take off of the national authority as specified in the Convention. A focal point has also been established, and the scientific community in Nigeria dealing with chemicals and allied products has been sensitized as to the provisions of the Convention.

Three years ago the United Nations Disarmament Commission reformed its agenda. It limited the issues for consideration to four items, which must be concluded within three years or be dropped. That reform appears to be succeeding, with the successful conclusion of one of the items on the agenda: "Guidelines and recommendations for objective information on military matters". Its adoption by the Commission is a significant achievement. It paves the way for greater openness and transparency on military matters while at the same time facilitating arms control and reductions. In addition, its adoption by consensus indicates that the atmosphere is now auspicious for multilateral negotiations on disarmament matters.

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The Nigerian delegation expects that the same constructive approach and political will as made the attainment of consensus possible will be shown in regard to the other agenda items before the Commission. We have in mind in particular "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and related fields" and "Regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security". The latter is especially important, given the spate of conflicts in nearly all parts of the world and the role that regional organizations have been playing in conflict resolution. Indeed, consensus on this item at the 1993 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission will further strengthen the role which regional organizations are expected to play under Chapter VIII of the Charter. We expect also that positive developments in the nuclear field will spill over into the consideration of the agenda item on nuclear disarmament before the Disarmament Commission.

The main institution that dealt with disarmament matters, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, has been reorganized. The Department, created after the conclusion of the first special session on disarmament in 1978, has been replaced by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, and the latter is subsumed under the Department of Political Affairs. The delegation of Nigeria hopes that the change in the name of the Department will not affect its functions or the importance the United Nations attaches to disarmament. The United Nations still needs to pursue disarmament issues vigorously. Disarmament remains vital to the attainment of international peace and security.

There is a continuing need for the participation of experts in the field of disarmament and security. By the end of this year, the Geneva-based disarmament fellowship programme will have produced 321 well-trained experts from about 120 Member States. Most of the former disarmament fellows now

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occupy important policy positions in the foreign ministries of their countries and are also members of delegations to multilateral disarmament forums. Indeed, we are fortunate this year to have as our Rapporteur in this Committee a former disarmament fellow.

Regional disarmament workshops promote confidence-building measures. We note with satisfaction the Secretary-General's initiative in expanding the programme. We call on all Member States to continue to support the programme.

We took the bold step last year of adopting the resolution on transparency in armaments, which established the Register of Conventional Arms. We believe that transparency and openness in armaments could enhance confidence-building among Member States, thereby strengthening regional and international peace and security. My delegation finds the present approach to the issue of transparency in armaments discriminatory as the scope of the Register is limited only to conventional arms. Transparency in armaments should include the production, stockpiling and transfer of all weapons of mass destruction. However, in order to be effective and universal, the Register should, as provided for in the resolution, be expanded to include available background information regarding military holdings and procurement through national production.

The Nigerian delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on the Register of Conventional Arms (A/47/342 and Corr.1). In many respects the report is helpful in terms of elaborating further the standardized format of reporting imports and exports of the seven categories of conventional weapons stipulated in the Register. We would have wished to see in the report firmer recommendations for the expansion of the Register to cover available background information regarding military holdings and procurement through national production.

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One objective of the resolution on transparency in armaments is restraint in the export of arms to areas of conflict. However, the spirit is being violated by continuing arms transfers to volatile regions. Nigeria appeals to all major arms exporters to respect the spirit of the resolution on transparency in armaments.

In the post-cold-war era, disarmament continues to be relevant to the international community. Disarmament should be pursued vigorously in a constructive and pragmatic manner, bearing in mind the need to readjust to the new global challenges. Despite the uncertainties created by some recent events, the overall global situation provides opportunities for further disarmament measures. We must recognize our responsibilities through sober thinking, knowing that peace and security are never won for all time but can be constructed on the basis of political choice and consensus.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.